



MINUTES

OCONEE COUNTY COUNCIL

Regular Meeting

September 20, 2022

MEMBERS, OCONEE COUNTY COUNCIL

Mr. John Elliott, Chairman, District I
Mr. Paul Cain, Vice Chairman, District III
Mr. Julian Davis III, Chairman Pro Tem, District IV
Mr. Glenn Hart, District V
District II

Oconee County Council met at 6:00 PM in Council Chambers, 415 South Pine Street, Walhalla, SC with all Council Members, County Administrator Amanda F. Brock, County Attorney David Root, & Jennifer C. Adams, Clerk to Council present.

Press: Pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act, notice of the meeting, date, time, place of meeting and agenda were posted on the bulletin board at the County Administrative Offices, 415 South Pine Street, Walhalla, SC, and the County Council website [www.oconeesc.com/council]. In addition, it was made available [*upon request*] to the newspapers, radio stations, television stations and concerned citizens.

Members of the press present: Riley Morningstar / The Journal

Call to Order

Mr. Elliott called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Mr. Elliott opened the meeting reminding the public they have two opportunities to speak during Council meetings, which is during the public comment session and also during the public hearing session, if scheduled. Other than those two instances, the public should remain silent during the Council meeting. Anyone making a disturbance during the meeting will be asked to leave Council Chambers for the remainder of the meeting.

Moment of Silence

Mr. Elliott asked for a moment of silence prior to the Invocation by County Council Chaplain.

Invocation by County Council Chaplain

Mr. Root, County Council Chaplain, gave the invocation.

Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Hart led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

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Approval of Minutes

Mr. Davis made a motion, seconded by Mr. Cain, approved 4 - 0, to approve the September 6, 2022 Special Meeting minutes as presented.

Mr. Cain made a motion, seconded by Mr. Davis, approved 4 – 0, to approve the September 6, 2022 Council / OJRSA Joint Meeting minutes as presented.

Mr. Cain made a motion, seconded by Mr. Davis, approved 4 – 0, to approve the September 6, 2022 regular meeting minutes as presented.

Mr. Cain made a motion, seconded by Mr. Davis, approved 4 – 0, to approve the September 13, 2022 Millage Workshop minutes as presented.

Attorney's Comments

Mr. Root addressed Council with the following topics:

1. A motion to amend the agenda is needed to place Project Queso Grant Agreement under Action Item(s) in order meet a submission deadline.

Mr. Cain made a motion, seconded by Mr. Davis, approved 4 – 0, to amend the agenda to add the following action item: Authorize the County Administrator to execute and deliver the Project Queso Grant Agreement (in backup and provided earlier today to Council by email), the Performance Agreement (upon receipt), and any related documents, all in order to foster a grant from the State of South Carolina of \$200,000 to Project Queso (Curtec) for site improvement costs.

2. If **Ordinance 2022-22** passes first reading it will then be forwarded to the Planning Commission pursuant to the Oconee County Code of Ordinances for a public hearing and their report, noting this process requires a 30-day notice of hearing and it would be a while before it returns to Council.

3. In relation to **Ordinance 2022-23**, Mr. Root informed Council that he is currently working with Ben Olsen with the Department of Transportation and with Kyle Reid, Oconee County Assistant Director of Public Works, to ensure the ordinance language references the Department of Transportation standards.

4. **Ordinance 2022-24**, related to proposed amendments to lot size and density provisions in a portion of the Lake Overlay, will be required to go to the Planning Commission before third reading for a report and their recommendation. Mr. Root also noted that notifications by mail will be sent to affected residents and recommended a public posting as well, noting the more notice the better.

Administrator's Comments

None at this meeting.

Millage Presentation to Council

Mrs. Christy Hubbard addressed Council utilizing a power point presentation entitled, "2023 Fiscal Year 2022 Tax Year Oconee County Millage Presentation" [copy filed in backup] that included details regarding the current recommended millage.

Mr. Davis made a motion, seconded by Mr. Cain, to approve millage as presented.

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Mr. Hart inquired if this would cause a tax increase on an example home valued at \$100,000.

Mrs. Hubbard noted that if the home was valued at \$100,000 last year and the value remained at \$100,000 this year, you would not see a tax increase but if your home increased in value with the reassessment, your taxes would slightly increase.

Motion approved 3 – 1 [Mr. Hart opposed].

Proclamations

PROCLAMATION 2022-16 A PROCLAMATION RECOGNIZING UNITED STATES CONSTITUTION WEEK

Mr. Davis made a motion, seconded by Mr. Cain, approved 4 – 0, to approve **Proclamation 2022-16** on first and final reading.

Public Comment Session

If you are not able to attend in person and you have a comment, you may submit it by contacting our Clerk to Council, Jennifer C. Adams at jennifercadams@oconeesc.com or 864-718-1023, so that she may receive your comment and read it into the record.

Mr. Brannon Massey addressed Council concerning his desire to create transitional housing for men at two separate locations within Oconee County and provided details of services that will be offered at these locations.

Ms. Charity Comeaux informed Council that a home has been purchased with the intent to create transitional housing for women within the County, with the goal of life and situational changes for women.

Ms. Kay Knapp addressed Council regarding the topics of property taxes and reassessment, growth in Oconee County, and the appointment of Teresa Spicer to the Planning Commission.

Council Members Comments

Mr. Hart commented that Mr. Don Mize, District III 2023 elect, was in attendance for the meeting and is prepared to sit in on Executive Session if Council is in agreement to allow him to do so.

Mr. Davis commented that Council usually allows this in November.

Mr. Elliot, Council Chair, noted that Mr. Mize would need to meet with Mr. Root, County Attorney, to sign a non-disclosure agreement before he would be able to join in on Executive Sessions.

Mr. Hart made a motion, seconded by Mr. Cain, instructing staff to complete the necessary documents with Mr. Mize that will allow him to join Executive Sessions before he takes Council District III seat in January 2023.

Mr. Root informed Council there is not rule as to a set date that Mr. Mize could start attending Execution Sessions.

Motion approved 4 – 0.

Mr. Cain extended his thanks to Mr. Massey and Ms. Comeaux for their efforts in providing the transitional housing services to Oconee County citizens.

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Presentation to Council

Dream Center Presentation to Council - Ms. Chris Wilson, Executive Director

Ms. Wilson was unable to attend the Council meeting; therefore, this presentation was cancelled.

Public Hearings for the Following Ordinances *If you would like to be heard during either of the public hearings, please contact Clerk to Council Jennifer C. Adams at jennifercadams@oconeesc.com or 864-718-1023 so that your participation may be coordinated.*

ORDINANCE 2022-21 AN ORDINANCE TO SUPPLEMENT ORDINANCE 2021-14, WHICH APPROPRIATED AND AUTHORIZED THE EXPENDITURE OF TWO MILLION AND 00/100 (\$2,000,000.00) DOLLARS OF LOCAL CORONAVIRUS FISCAL RECOVERY FUNDING RECEIVED BY OCONEE COUNTY (“COUNTY”) UNDER THE AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT OF 2021 (“ARPA”) FOR PURPOSES OF THE SALEM WATER INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT (“PROJECT”), BY APPROPRIATING AND AUTHORIZING THE EXPENDITURE OF AN ADDITIONAL FIVE HUNDRED, FIFTY THOUSAND, AND 00/100 (\$550,000.00) DOLLARS FOR THE PROJECT, SO THAT THE TOTAL APPROPRIATION AND EXPENDITURE AUTHORIZATION FOR THE PROJECT WILL NOW TOTAL TWO MILLION, FIVE HUNDRED, FIFTY THOUSAND, AND 00/100 (\$2,550,000.00) DOLLARS; AND OTHER MATTERS RELATED THERETO.

Mr. Elliott opened the floor for Public Comment.

Noting that no citizens signed up to address Council; Mr. Elliott opened the floor for any citizen wishing to address Council regarding this ordinance. No citizen addressed Council and no citizen submitted or presented any written comments for the record.

Mr. Elliott closed the Public Hearing regarding **Ordinance 2022-21**.

Third Reading of the Following Ordinances

None scheduled for this meeting.

Second Reading of the Following Ordinances

None scheduled for this meeting.

First Reading of the Following Ordinances

ORDINANCE 2022-22 AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 32 OF THE OCONEE COUNTY CODE OF ORDINANCES, IN CERTAIN LIMITED REGARDS AND PARTICULARS ONLY, BY ADDING A PROVISION PROVIDING FOR PREAPPROVAL BY THE SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION IN RELATION TO SUBDIVISION PLANS SUBMITTED FOR PRELIMINARY APPROVAL TO OCONEE COUNTY FOR PROPERTIES WITH ROAD FRONTAGE ON U.S. HIGHWAY 123, BETWEEN THE OCONEE COUNTY - PICKENS COUNTY BORDER AND THE EASTERNMOST BOUNDARY OF THE CITY OF SENECA; AND OTHER MATTERS RELATED THERETO.

Mr. Cain made a motion, seconded by Mr. Davis, to approve **Ordinance 2022-22** on first reading.

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Mr. Hart wanted to know why this was brought to Council and stated that it is a duplication and a waste of time.

Mr. Root provided an explanation as to why this is being brought to Council.

Mr. Davis noted that from his understanding the Department of Transportation is trying to clear up some issues by adding this step for both parties involved, Oconee County and Department of Transportation.

Mr. Hart commented that if this added step makes this process simpler, he will go along with it.

Motion approved 4 – 0.

Mr. Davis then clarified with Council Chair, Mr. Elliott that **Ordinance 2022-22** would now be forwarded to the Planning Commission for their review.

Mr. Root, County Attorney, confirmed Mr. Davis' statement, noting that the Planning Commission will give a 30-day notice of a public hearing, then will review and issue their report, putting this back to Council at a November or December meeting.

ORDINANCE 2022-23 AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 26 OF THE OCONEE COUNTY CODE OF ORDINANCES, IN CERTAIN LIMITED REGARDS AND PARTICULARS ONLY, TO ALLOW FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF SIDEWALKS IN COUNTY RIGHT-OF-WAYS; AND OTHER MATTERS RELATED THERETO.

Mr. Cain made a motion, seconded by Mr. Davis, to approve **Ordinance 2022-23**, on first reading.

Mr. Davis questioned if **Ordinance 2022-23** will be referred to the Planning Commission as well.

Mr. Root, County Attorney, noted **Ordinance 2022-23** came from the Planning Commission with his (Mr. Root) revisions and that he will also be in communication with the Department of Transportation regarding the wording of **Ordinance 2022-23** and its drawings before second reading.

Short discussion between Mr. Root and Mr. Davis followed before the final vote.

Motion approved 4 – 0.

ORDINANCE 2022-24 AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 38 OF THE OCONEE COUNTY CODE OF ORDINANCES, IN CERTAIN LIMITED REGARDS AND PARTICULARS ONLY, BY REVISING THE LOT SIZE AND DENSITY STANDARDS APPLICABLE TO THE LAKE OVERLAY DISTRICT; AND OTHER MATTERS RELATED THERETO.

Mr. Elliott made a motion, seconded by Mr. Hart, approved 4 – 0, to remove **Ordinance 2022-24** from the agenda and forward it to the Planning Commission for their review and recommendation back to Council.

ORDINANCE 2022-25 AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION AND DELIVERY OF A LEASE AGREEMENT BETWEEN OCONEE COUNTY AS LESSOR AND JULIE IBRAHIM AS LESSEE FOR CERTAIN OFFICE SPACE LOCATED AT THE OCONEE COUNTY REGIONAL AIRPORT, 365 AIRPORT ROAD, SENECA, SOUTH CAROLINA; AND OTHER MATTERS RELATED THERETO.

Mr. Davis made a motion, seconded by Mr. Cain, to approve **Ordinance 2022-25** on first reading.

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Mr. Hart inquired about what the above mentioned office space is in use for.

Ms. Brock addressed Council informing them that Ms. Ibrahim, who is employed by Clemson University, utilizes this space for an off-campus office.

Mr. Root noted that this is a renewal of a prior three-year lease with Ms. Ibrahim for this use of this office space.

Motion approved 4 – 0.

First and Final Reading for the Following Resolutions

None scheduled for this meeting.

Discussion Regarding Action Items

~~Council discussion and consideration of funding allocation in the amount of \$1,000,000 for The Dream Center to assist in their intended expansion into Oconee County~~

None scheduled for this meeting.

Authorize the County Administrator to execute and deliver the Project Queso Grant Agreement (in backup and provided earlier today to Council by email), the Performance Agreement (upon receipt), and any related documents, all in order to foster a grant from the State of South Carolina of \$200,000 to Project Queso (Curtec) for site improvement costs.

Mr. Davis made a motion, seconded by Mr. Cain, approved 4 – 0, to authorize the County Administrator to execute and deliver the Project Queso Grant Agreement (in backup and provided earlier today to Council by email), the Performance Agreement (upon receipt), and any related documents, all in order to foster a grant from the State of South Carolina of \$200,000 to Project Queso (Curtec) for site improvement costs.

Council Committee Reports

None scheduled for this meeting

Board & Commission Appointments

Agriculture Advisory Board

1 Ex-Officio Seat: One questionnaire on file for this seat

Mr. Hart questioned the Pickens County address of Mr. Talley on his questionnaire.

Mr. Root clarified that Ex-Officio Seats are non-voting and are simply for advising the board and candidates do not have to live in Oconee County.

Mr. Cain made a motion, seconded by Mr. Hart, approved 4 – 0, to approve the appointment of Mr. Talley to the Ex-Officio seat on the Agriculture Advisory Board.

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Arts and Historical Commission

1 At-Large Seat: No questionnaire on file for this seat

Conservation Bank Board

District IV Seat: No questionnaire on file for this seat

1 At-Large Seat: No questionnaire on file for this seat

Mr. Davis noted that he has a District IV questionnaire to be submitted for the next Council meeting for the Conservation Bank board.

Executive Session:

Mr. Davis made a motion, seconded by Mr. Cain, approved 4 – 0 to enter into Executive Sessions for the following purposes, as allowed for § 30-4-70(a) of the South Carolina Code of Laws:

1. *Discussion regarding an Economic Development matter, Project Bamboo.*
2. *Receive legal advice and discuss potential contractual matter related to land adjacent to the Oconee County Rock Quarry.*
3. *Discussion regarding an Economic Development matter, Project Badge*

Council entered into Executive Session at 6:42 p.m.

Council returned from Executive Session at 7:06 p.m. on a motion made by Mr. Cain, seconded by Mr. Hart, approved 4 – 0.

Adjourn:

Mr. Hart made a motion, approved unanimously, to adjourn at 7:06 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Jennifer C. Adams
Clerk to Council

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